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EDITORIAL COMMENT

Mr. Linzer has made a contribution to the literature in the field of school social work in his statement of the professional and personal qualities which will enable the school social worker to function effectively. This can serve as a basis for self-evaluation. His discussion of the relationship between the teacher and school social worker, with the attitudes of each, and the responsibility of each, is clear and of value for both professional groups.

Miss Pastor describes graphically how two professions, education and social work, planned together to meet the need for trained social workers in the field of school social work. This program within the Department of Education of the University of Puerto Rico, was the forerunner of the later program developed in the School for Social Work. This is a demonstration of real pioneering within recent years by our neighbor, Puerto Rico. Present day emphasis upon Schools of Education and Schools of Social Work recognizing their mutual contribution is demonstrated by this early experience.

The importance and meaning of supervision in field work training for school counselors is given emphasis by Mrs. Wessel's description of the dynamic use of relationship to further growth.

A MENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM FOR SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS

EDWARD LINZER, Executive Secretary
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Schools were created by the community, at first, to provide special experiences in learning, primarily those which lead to the acquisition of knowledge. As time went on, schools came gradually to share other responsibilities which originally belonged to the family. Among these functions is the important role of assisting parents in the child's development in preparation for adult life. Forward looking educators have recognized the great body of knowledge which indicates the significance of healthy emotional development for good intellectual performance. As a result, the educational system is ready now to include programs for the promotion of healthy emotional development as part of the regular curriculum, and to accept further responsibilities for the preparation of its students for the adaptation to the stresses and strains of our modern world. In short, schools now recognize and accept their responsibilities with regard to concerning themselves with the whole child.

This concept of a broader understanding of the child has grown out of new developments in the fields of social and medical sciences. Through psychology and psychiatry, more insight is being gained into the causes of human behavior and tests have been evolved to measure ability and learning methods. Through social casework, methods of helping individuals with personal and social adjustments were formulated. Some school systems came to recognize the close relationship of these contributions to their expanding role and consequently perceived the value of adapting this knowledge to learning more about the basic needs of individual pupils. As a result of this awareness, increasing emphasis is now being placed upon personality factors as well as upon academic achievement.

Everywhere on the educational front, this developing interest in the mental hygiene aspects of growth has been demonstrated through increasing numbers of mental health institutes and workshops for teachers. The new orientation in teacher training similarly reflects this trend.

Vital to the implementation of this mental hygiene concept in education is the school social worker who functions as a part of the school

set-up. In addition to her casework responsibilities with individual students she makes an important contribution by working with teachers to increase their knowledge of the motivations of human behavior and the development of personality. This is helpful to teachers not only for general classroom purposes but as an aid in their early recognition of a child's difficulties and subsequent referral for service before the problem becomes acute.

Included in the concepts of human behavior which the school social worker shares with teachers is the role of the school in personality development.

It is now recognized that the foundation for sound mental as well as physical growth begins in infancy and early childhood. The human relationships in the life of the child are thought of as the basic media of personality development. As the child turns his interests away from the home and begins to play in the neighborhood, and later enters school, other human relationships begin to have influence upon his personality development. The image of self which he evolves is developed through his relationships with those about him, principally parents, siblings, or teachers. From them he derives a conception of himself as being good or bad, capable or inferior, adequate or inadequate, lovable or unlovable. A great part of his outlook on life is based upon this very important image of self. To view a child through this perspective counteracts the tendency to attempt a simple description of personality.

Emphasis should be placed upon the importance of the school in the life of the child, not only as an educational force but also, and primarily, as a powerful influence in determining his ability to get along happily in the world. In adjusting to school, the child is making three of the fundamental adjustments to life which are all important to his emotional development.

First, he is learning to make social adjustments; that is, adjustments to his classmates and individuals outside of his home. At home, the child has his own individual relationship with his parents and siblings and has more or less defined his place in the family. He has his own rights. In school, he has 30 to 40 or even 50 contemporaries, all of whom make equal claim for recognition and attention. The school needs to help him meet this competition without developing feelings of inferiority and resentment to other children.

The second fundamental adjustment to life in which the school plays a part is the adjustment to authority which should take place in the

presence of just and friendly attitudes. Its development is essential for group living, and therefore it should be developed in him in neither a hostile, cruel nor unfair way. To the latter approaches he may secretly or openly rebel or he may meekly submit. Either of these methods is unwholesome in terms of his future development.

The third adjustment which the child makes in the school setting is that of adjusting to his own limitations. Each child would like to be the first, the brightest, and best loved in every situation. Early in life, he discovers that he has limitations which can prevent his reaching this goal. School can help him find compensations through a wise use of what abilities he has, encourage him to develop to a maximum within his own limitations, and build up a reassuring sense of his own adequacy, so that he will be able to allow others to be superior without strong feelings of inadequacy and inferiority.

Therefore, we should strive to adapt our schools to the need of our children by fitting academic demands to their abilities and developmental levels. Inappropriate educational measures frequently create disturbances in children. Many schools throughout the country have made considerable strides toward this goal but the need for continued growth in this area is great. School personnel should recognize behavior manifestations at the various levels of childhood development in order to differentiate the severity of behavior problems. The insistence on immediate submission during temporary periods of rebellion often results in the development of anxious, guilty, and hostile feelings on the part of the child toward adults and toward all persons in positions of authority. Children should be held within tolerable limits of behavior and should be helped to modify their behavior to make it suitable for group inter-action. Alternatives should be provided from which a teacher or school social worker can choose to help a child gain status and recognition.

Perhaps the greatest opportunity the school has as a socializing force in the life of the child is to help him accept authority as friendly and constructive rather than as something to be feared and resisted. A certain amount of misbehavior is normal, for the child must learn through experience. Good discipline helps the child to discover that misconduct brings unpleasant consequences and yet does not weaken his incentive to behave well by arousing resentment and inferiority feelings. Good discipline lets the child experience the satisfaction of fitting into the group and helps create an atmosphere conducive to learning and achievement. It builds up a healthy attitude toward authority as something necessary for gaining mutual and desirable ends, rather than as an arbitrary blind

force imposed on him. The trend of modern education is definitely toward a more understanding and mutually accepting relationship between teacher and pupil. The school social worker has a definite role to play in fostering this relationship.

Persons with a mental hygiene orientation note what the child does, that is, his symptomatic behavior, but go beyond the manifest activities and ask why the child behaves as he does. They look upon the attitudes and behavior of children primarily as their forms of adjustment to various life situations. They know that the child is reacting in a normal pattern and in a manner that is most natural for him. When aberrations of behavior such as lying or cheating occur, they reflect forms of adjustment to certain problems besetting the child. He uses those weapons which he can muster and which have proved successful to him in the past. For example, cheating as a form of adjustment in some children is motivated by somewhat similar drives in other children who are doing their lessons conscientiously and in compliance with school regulation, for the achievements of their own ambitions and also for the recognition and approval of parents, teachers, and classmates.

The need of a particular child to use such socially unacceptable behavior as lying or cheating to gain recognition and approval only serves to highlight his need for help in working through his individual problem.

Another child who seems overprotective of his younger sister, may openly torment other little girls. He is best understood by a study of the unconscious factors at work underlying his behavior rather than by resorting only to his conscious statements. School personnel should be aware in such a situation that the boy has hostile feelings toward his sister which he is not able to express directly. He therefore chooses for his wrath, sister surrogates, or other little girls. Teachers and school social workers should be alert also, not only to cases of misbehavior, but should consider the bright child with good family background who seems to lack ambition and fails to reach the level of achievement his capacities warrant, or the quiet, withdrawn child who is too much an observer and too little a participant in the life of the classroom. When a physically healthy child of normal intelligence is inattentive, cries, daydreams, or exhibits other evidences of failure to meet the demands of the classroom situation, the teacher might need to know more about his underlying feelings and their interrelationship with symptoms which he is expressing. If the teacher is able to learn about the causal background and the undercurrents of distress in the pupil's life, treatment may be planned for improvement of his personality in the classroom and elsewhere. In

this respect conferences between the teacher and the school social worker would serve to clarify reasons for the child's problem.

Instead of criticizing or censuring the child for his behavior, the teacher should strive to find ways of understanding it. A teacher who behaves like a good parent toward her pupils may be very helpful to a child whose home life is characteristized by attitudes of indifference and rejection toward him. Another teacher who shows favoritism in the classroom may be very disturbing to a child who has had unhappy experiences at home where his parents seem to prefer a younger brother or sister and to discriminate against him.

We might cite the case of a completely rejected boy whose only positive emotional tie was with a first grade teacher. While in her class he showed few of the behavior problems manifested previously and did acceptable work. However, when he was promoted and transferred to another teacher who did not possess the same degree of understanding, his disturbances returned. From that point on he was unable to reestablish the same rapport with future teachers who failed to understand, accept, or help him and who consequently failed him just as his family had done. As a result he felt unwanted in all areas of his life and reverted to day dreaming, school failure, and overt misbehavior. The child's personality is thus viewed as an active dynamic process which, within the limits of emotional endowment and in terms of previous personal development, responds to the environmental influences which surround him.

* * *

Attitudes of understanding, acceptance, helpfulness, and encouragement on the part of teachers are therefore basically important to wholesome personality development. Although the majority of teachers are aware of this, all too frequently they do not integrate it into their professional knowledge.

Teachers who understand children most thoroughly show the following characteristics: They think of children's behavior as caused by a series of factors that can be identified and they therefore believe that children are understandable and educable. They can accept every child emotionally and respect him as a human being. They recognize that every child is unique and they constantly want to obtain information about him that will enable them to know the factors that are influencing his development and behavior. They know the common developmental stresses and strains that all children face during the various phases of

their emotional and physical growth and what complications often arise as individuals with varying characteristics and backgrounds associate intimately with each other. They gather material about the child in a scientific way and use this information to help the child meet the problems of growing up.

When teachers come to know their pupils as individual personalities and try to understand them, the children actually show greater achievement in academic areas and teachers are enabled to function more effectively as molders of personality. The teacher who develops skill in analyzing patterns of behavior, finds that she is facing some difficult adjustments herself and the school social worker needs to be aware of these problems.

These adjustments on the teacher's part are difficult because they involve among other things modifying habits of thought and behavior of long standing. One of these habits may be the teacher's practice of viewing all incidents in terms of her own experiences rather than considering them in the light of the child's background. Another practice in the need of modification might be observing the pupil only in terms of one outstanding personality trait, either positive or negative. A third adjustment which the teacher might have to make would be the avoidance of snap judgments and immediate interpretations on the basis of inadequate evidence.

In many instances self understanding would obviate difficulties from developing. For example, one teacher was unduly disturbed by the practice of children's bringing bicycles to school. She felt unusual responsibility for the safety and care of the children's bicycles. She worried constantly over the possibility of their being stolen. Consequently, she believed children should not bring bicycles to school and sought to have this regulation put into effect. Her reaction seemed to be out of proportion to the situation and while talking to her it was learned that she had never owned a bike, although she had cherished one as a youngster. As a result, she was truly envious of the children who were more fortunate than she had been and she manifested this attitude by trying to deny them this advantage.

As teachers deepen their understanding of causes that underlie the conduct of their pupils and as they increase their skills in identifying such causes, there results a developing change in the teacher. This change is reflected through greater calmness and objectivity in relation to their students and an increasing capacity for helpfulness. They may be freed

from the interferences of their own personal emotional attitudes and achieve a more detached, impersonal, or objective attitude in their interpretations of the meanings of children's behavior.

Teachers are helped toward objectivity by their frankness in facing the emotional "sore spots" or complexes in themselves which influence their responses to the behavior of children. They may be disturbed because of feelings of racial or religious prejudice, or feelings of insecurity which create resentment when their authority is questioned. Anxiety, fear, or inferiority feelings may also interfere with a teacher's objective attitude. Asking for outside help may be viewed by them as an indication of their lowered status or of their inability to cope with a problem.

The attitudes of a teacher toward her pupils are not only influenced by individual reactions to particular children but they are also affected by her feelings of security in teaching. The following pertinent questions will illustrate this point. Does the teacher have a real fondness for children? If she has not, the children will be the first to recognize this trait in her and openly show their resentment. Does the teacher have courage and self assurance? She needs these qualities in order to be secure in her relationships with her contemporaries, her pupils, and their parents. Does the teacher view her work as a dynamic experience which is constantly broadening and constantly presenting new challenging problems and opportunity for personal growth? If she does not, she has little to offer children in the way of a stimulating, meaningful educational experience.

The above-mentioned personality factors in teachers have been stressed because school social workers need to be aware of them and able to work with teachers who may or may not possess these positive traits.

Turning our focus from the child and the school to the school social worker herself, we see that one of her primary requisites is an ability to understand and get along with people. Such an understanding approach takes cognizance of the teachers' need to be appreciated, to be useful, to have new experiences, and to be understood. How does the school social worker help the teacher to gratify these needs in order that their mutual relationships may function smoothly in the interest of the child? The school social worker does this by showing her appreciation of the teacher's genuine skill and devotion not only in words but in actions. One teacher complained that a school social worker asked her questions and then did not wait to hear the end of the answer. A worker may often decry the fact that the teacher with whom she has contacts is not very stimulating or alert to the problems she is facing. It might behoove the school social

worker to try being a little stimulating herself. She might find what are the teacher's special interests in working with children and offer a word of sincere praise.

There are other vital factors that are to be considered if the relationship between the teacher and the school social worker is to function smoothly in the interest of the child. There should be a proper administrative setting in which the school social worker should be free to devote her time to casework. The type of casework that she does may be on different levels and will be dependent not only on the needs of the child but upon her own skill and training. A second factor which should exist is a thorough understanding of the difference in focus of the two professions involved despite their mutuality of agreement on goals to be achieved.

Each profession then must assume complete responsibility for his own area: the teacher in academic work, the school social worker in social work. It is important that despite differences in emphasis they apply the concept of team work in order to avoid conflict between them. Instead of working at cross purposes, it is necessary for the welfare of the child to integrate in a coordinated manner these two services and bodies of knowledge.

The school social worker is in an advantageous position in that she has the opportunity to observe the child in his home and in the community. In addition, she has the added advantage of observing how the home reacts to the child. These observations if they are thoroughly objective and free from speculation are of great value in rounding out the picture of the child's emotional and physical environment. She should be able to interpret to the teacher her social findings so that the teacher may better understand the child. The school social worker and teacher have a great deal to learn from each other and each must know what the other is doing and function as a team.

The school social worker must feel free to consult the teacher and integrate her findings and observations into the casework objectives. Another factor that will make for harmonious relationships is that each of the workers, the teacher and school social worker, should learn from each other as well as respect each other's function. Finally their personal relationship must be governed at all times by the universal basic principles which operate in all human relationships, namely reciprocal warm, friendly, tactful and courteous behavior.

Since the emotional environment of an administrative organization is largely determined at the top, the school social worker, to be effective, needs the acceptance, sympathy, cooperation, and understanding of the school administrators with whom positive relationships should be established. Experience has shown that much real gain can be accomplished by occasional informality, such as "over the lunch table" contact, rather than by purely professional discussions, and the school social worker should not be averse to utilizing such ethical and socially acceptable opportunities.

Social work in schools during the past decade has assumed professional status and has enhanced immeasurably the smoother functioning of the educational process in the classroom. Despite these gains, school social workers frequently are on the defensive when they find themselves functioning in team work with a much older and more universally accepted professional group. Consequently, they often fear to express an inability to achieve certain objectives and become resentful when asked to do impossible things. It is only as they grow in their feelings of security regarding their professional role and objectives, that they will be able to define and limit their function. If the school social worker is to gain the respect of teachers for her competence and help children, she must know what she can do and more important what she cannot do.

On the other hand, school social workers become justifiably resentful when they are considered as glorified messengers and their program becomes a catch all for duties which other school personnel do not have time to do. In terms of monetary factors alone, it is apparent that school social workers are expensive errand boys and failure to utilize their professional skills constructively is wasteful and debilitating.

By virtue of her years of training and experience, the school social worker should be able to speak with authority on social problems. She has become an expert in her field of endeavor and can earn her colleagues' respect by her competence which may be tested by certain criteria. For example, is her thinking supported by the best casework principles? Does she see not only the principles but the direct bearing of these principles upon the child? Is she able to evaluate the child's problem clearly in terms of conditioning factors impinging upon him? Is she realistic in her recommendations to implement a plan to alleviate the child's problem? Can she mobilize the community's resources or develop new ones to meet the child's needs? In essence, does she know what she is talking about?

The school social worker, therefore, needs to possess certain professional and personal qualities which will enable her to function effectively and to be accepted by the largest possible number of her associates. She must be accepted as a school social worker. Her co-workers in the educational field need to feel that there is mutual understanding. She should be careful to communicate in language free from technical terminology. She should have the adaptability to work within the framework of the school. The school social worker's ability to confer graciously and effectively with her colleagues is a further test of her flexibility. In summary, the school social worker needs to be a person who is both mature and tolerant, able to work with clients and co-workers alike, and able to understand both himself and other human beings.

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ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS MADE IN PUERTO RICO FOR THE TRAINING OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS

GEORGINA PASTOR, Acting Director
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Social work in the Department of Education of Puerto Rico started in the academic year 1928-29, when five teachers were appointed by the Department to work as special teachers in the program of the Second Unit Rural Schools. These schools were to serve as demonstration centers for the rural communities. The special teachers were to be the link between the community and the school, carrying the function of the school social worker. Emphasis, however, was to be placed on the solution of the recreational and health problems of the rural communities as a means of raising the standards of living of the inhabitants.

In the year 1930, Mrs. Dorothy D. Bourne, a graduate of the New York School of Social Work arrived in the Island. She was appointed area supervisor and organizer of social work in the program of rural education which was started in 1928. She envisaged the work to be performed as a new departure in the field of school social work as practiced in the United States and as she pointed out on more than one occasion, the work would not be based on casework primarily nor on the technique of relief or even of individual readjustment, but rather on an interpretation, through education, of the school throughout the community and of the community to the school.

Thus, the training to be received by the prospective social workers would necessarily be different from that offered in conventional social work, though she considered it would be of equal value to the public good because of its high standards. That she was right in her assumption was shown by the acceptance to membership by the American Association of Social Workers, of some of the workers who followed the training scheduled by Mrs. Bourne, and by the approval in 1934, by the Legislature of Puerto Rico, of the first law regulating the practice of social work in Puerto Rico.

Under the above mentioned premises, a group of thirty-five persons, some of them college graduates of the University of Puerto Rico and

others graduates of the normal school of the same university were selected by the Department of Education to initiate their social work training.

The question of training social workers was discussed jointly by the Department of Education and the University of Puerto Rico, and in the summer session of the year 1930, the first credit course in social work was offered at the University of Puerto Rico. Instructors from the Economics and Sociology Department of the University as well as physicians from the School of Tropical Medicine, a branch of the University of Puerto Rico, would provide the specific subject matter in economics, sociology and medical information needed by the future social workers. Mrs. Dorothy D. Bourne and a group of Puerto Rican social workers trained in the mainland would provide the specific social work instruction. The first courses offered during this first summer session included the following subjects: Principles of Social Casework, Health Problems of Puerto Rico, Economics, with special emphasis on the economic problems of Puerto Rico; and Rural Sociology, emphasizing the rural conditions and attitudes of the Puerto Ricans. Twenty-eight persons who approved the course were appointed by the Department of Education to serve as special teachers in the field of social work in the Second Unit Rural Schools.

Through a verbal agreement between the University of Puerto Rico and the Department of Education the newly appointed social workers were to continue their training during four consecutive summer sessions and three years field work, at the end of which the social workers would receive a Certificate of Social Work. Summer school academic credits for four summers were to be the equivalent of one full year. Three years of supervised field work was remunerative field work. The school social workers of the Second Unit Rural Schools were to be supervised by the Supervisor of Social Work of the Department of Education. Supervision included analysis of the community organization and group work as well as the participation of the school social worker in the school program, study of records, of required reports; and of yearly research projects carried, related to university courses, in health, maladjusted children, social problems, etc. Supervision of routine and specific connections with the school would be in charge of the Superintendent of Schools.[1] The Supervisor of Social Work of the Department of Education would also plan the summer school courses after the first summer session.

During the school year 1933-34 a graduate curriculum was approved

[1] Memo to Dr. Osuna by Mrs. Bourne - 1934-35.

by the faculty of the University after careful consideration. The increased demand for social workers due to the extension of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration with the possibilities of a general rehabilitation plan for Puerto Rico, combined with the best professional advice, made it seem highly desirable to put training immediately on a basis which would be recognized by the American Association of Schools of Social Work.

Therefore, in August, 1934, a memorandum on graduate social work developed along the general lines of professional social work schools was presented to the University Chancellor, and on August 16, 1934, was approved in principle by the Board of Trustees.

By this time, with Federal Funds available, the School of Social Work of the University of Puerto Rico was able to increase its faculty and at the same time, its program. The graduate program presented in August, 1934, was approved in 1935 on a provisional basis by the American Association of Schools of Social Work. Scholarships made available by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration provided opportunities for study to newly recruited students. Summer courses, mainly for school social workers, were continued since the school social workers were not allowed to leave their positions during the school year. The shortness of the summer session of six weeks duration reduced the program to a field work placement, plus one or two academic subjects.

The F. E. R. A. recruited almost all the trained social workers of the Department of Education which in turn found it impossible to fill all vacancies with trained persons. This situation by 1942 had become a chronic one. Also there was an acute situation due to the fact that a considerable number of untrained workers had been engaged as school social workers.

Miss Antoinette Cannon, head of the School of Social Work by this time, offered the Department of Education a solution to the problem. For the chronic need, the regular program of the School of Social Work for full-time and part-time students should be expanded, especially in its field work opportunities, and probably scholarships or leaves of absence should be given. For the acute situation, the summer school program could be a hope.

To meet the acute need, and at the same time preserve the educational value of the field and classroom program for beginners, the faculty of the School of Social Work agreed to admit beginning workers, designated as school social workers, to the Department of Education to the

summer school with the following provision: an additional field work center or centers be made available for the school's use, that the students selected could give eight weeks to the summer program, and that there was some prospect that when they returned to their work in the schools they would have supervision. In addition to this, the Commissioner of Education was urged to consider the plan jointly agreed upon by the Social Work Faculty and by the Supervisor of School Social Workers, namely the opening in the summer of 1942 of at least one field work center in a school accessible to the University. It was suggested that in such a center, a student supervisor be placed in charge of the office. She would develop the case load to be used in the teaching of school social workers. The duration of the field work training would be for eight weeks. The student supervisor would naturally be selected by the School of Social Work. This plan was accepted and carried out between the School of Social Work and the Department of Education until the summer of 1945, when the field work session was extended to cover a three-month period.

The policy of offering field work during the summer session was discontinued for several reasons: the heat made intense work impractical; it was difficult for the School's Field Supervisor to supervise the field work students during the summer session because the thirteen weeks' period overlapped the end of the second semester and the beginning of the first semester's work; and further it was difficult to obtain agency supervisors to do the supervision. Besides the problems mentioned there was the added difficulty caused by the fact that the public schools do not function normally during the summer. This resulted in some superficiality in the setting, for the students did not have the opportunity of establishing working relationships with the teachers or in finding their place in the administrative milieu.

As a result of this experience, a plan was discussed by the School of Social Work with the Department of Education which, since 1946 has been in operation. The plan provided that the school social workers have their field work experience during the first or second semester of the school year, through placements in schools set apart as practice centers, the Department of Education assigning the school social workers to these centers through administrative arrangements. The selection of the field work centers was made jointly by the School of Social Work through the Supervisor of the School of Social Work and the Supervisor of School Social Workers of the Department of Education. In the selection of the practice centers, due consideration was given to office facilities, attitudes

of the school principals in regards to having a field work center in their schools, number of schools assigned to workers in each case and needs of the same. The fact that most of the schools selected had not had the full services of a school social worker contributed to the warm welcome given by the school principals and teaching staff to the field work centers.

Arrangements were also made so that the case load of the regular worker, where there had been one, be transferred to the student worker. Whenever the case load became too large, two students instead of one, were assigned to the center so that there would not be undue pressure on the student.

Once the visiting teacher has been admitted and placed in a field work center, she continues to be an employee of the Department of Education with authorization to attend the social work courses at the University of Puerto Rico. The number of clock hours required by the school of all field work students is accepted by the Department of Education as their work to the agency.

Supervision of the school social workers in these field work centers rests entirely on the field work supervisor of the School of Social Work who controls too their case load. On the other hand, the students are responsible to the school principal on all administrative and routine matters of the schools where they are placed.

This plan, it seems to our faculty, has proved to be the most effective of all others put into operation. Through it the School of Social Work has been able to control the case load of the students, both in regards to quantity and to types of problems. This had made possbile for them to have experience in casework help offered to children and their parents in relation to school adjustment. Also, it has given the students the opportunity to work with community and social agencies as well as work with other school services and have regular working relationships with teachers.

In the spring of 1949, the School of Social Work was able to offer for the first time field work for school social workers in the field of social group work.

The Department of Education was undertaking a reorganization of its program, focusing its main interests in group activities. Thus provision was made by the School of Social Work to offer a program for school social workers, which covered the field of Social Group Work and Community Organization. School social workers admitted to this program came under the administrative arrangements already described.

FIELD WORK IN THE TRAINING OF SCHOOL COUNSELORS[1]

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There is a widespread interest in counseling today. The very word represents to many people a kind of magic that can be purchased, which promises help without binding the asker of help to any commitment, to any control. There is a take it or leave it freedom about the word counseling—an implication of mutuality, which denies the real struggle that takes place when one admits problem, and goes to another to ask for help with it. This much we may as well concede, that regardless of what we call the process of help-taking, and regardless of where it operates, no matter how authoritative the setting, whether school, or court, or hospital, or prison, or a private social agency, taking help in the final analysis is always a voluntary matter, and thus cannot take place unless the person involved not only admits need, but finds in himself enough courage to trust another human being to be of help to him. So whether you call it counseling, casework, or by whatever other name, you are still in the area of person-to-person relationships, where two people meet face-to-face, without any other content between them than the stark realization that one of them is in trouble and has had to place his problem before the other one for some kind of advice, or clue, or direction as how to find his way out of an impasse. I say impasse, because seldom does anyone bring a problem before another in this way, until the problem is well beyond solution, of his own effort.

In the field of social work, social agencies are rapidly developing new services which they designate as counseling—youth counseling, parent-child counseling, marital counseling—which services as you see, are not directed toward purely inner problems of the individual self, not purely psychological, but problems of relationship. Nor are they as objective as the services we have been accustomed to assigning to social agencies—such as financial help, help with housing problems, or health and employment. Today I am not to discuss the meaning of the phenomenon of the rapid spread of this form of professional help which resides in a relationship with another human being for some resolution

[1] Speech presented at Schoolmen's Week, University of Pennsylvania, April 13, 1951.

of the problems of living in one's setting, nor to discuss in general the training needed in order to give help through counseling. Today I am to speak more explicitly of the training of the school counselor,[2] that individual in the school setting who by his very name holds forth the promise to the child, to his parent, and to the teacher, too, that the kind of help I have been describing is available. The counselor is that member of the school team, who more than any other, carries the responsibility for individualizing the educational experience for the child, who has nothing to teach the child, no content, no knowledge, no skills; so that the relationship between them when it does come about, results from the fact that either the child has singled himself out from the rest of the pupils in some way, or that his attitude or his conduct has caused him to be singled out by his fellow classmates or by his teachers.

Basically, education has a socializing purpose, and society is surely right in putting upon the individual pupil the responsibility and the discipline of essential conformity to the controls of its school system. But equally basic to our society today, is the belief, as old at least as Plato, in the power and the value of the individual human being—in Plato's language, the individual soul. The counselor in the school setting in our present world carries the burden of reconciling these two ancient values, which are not always easily reconciled. The clashes between them form the very content of the counselor's job. Each of us carries this duality within himself, and in all of our living we find ways of balancing the right amount of "we-ness" and the enough of "I-ness". Every child has his wish to be one of his group, indistinguishable from his kind, belonging and accepted at home and at school; and yet there is that other side of his feeling to reckon with, too, his proper belief in his own uniqueness, and his wish—at times even his insistence—that concessions and indulgences should be granted to his difference from others. It is when this natural duality turns from duality into conflict, through the child's unfortunate encounter with the outside forces in his world, and the conflict is some way acted out in the school, that the counselor has a "client", stubborn, rebellious, or withdrawn. The school counselor, in my judgment, is truly a balancing force in the school if he is firmly related to the group setting, with all its appropriately authoritative and compelling and even coercive component parts—principal, teachers, fellow pupils, buildings and grounds, structure of time, of hours and days, of bells and

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[2] The *school social worker* is designated by many different titles throughout the country, such as visiting teacher, home and school visitor, visiting counselor, counselor, and others. In Philadelphia school social work is the responsibility of the *counselor.*

ticking clocks, structure of classroom, of recitation and written assignments, of curricular and extra-curricular demands and expectations, of gymnasium and laboratory. He does not ask that these be relaxed or altered to suit the wish or whim of an individual child, no matter how personally persuasive that child may be about the specialness of himself and his circumstances. But he ought to be able to represent these basic terms of the learning situation with the deepest consideration of the struggle the individual child undergoes, when that child, for whatever reason, finds himself locked in a battle of wills that does not permit him to use himself within the school setting, toward productive development. The saddest aspect of this battle is that it is usually not only projected outward by the child in impudence, or truancy and absence, and failing grades, but that it is also fought internally, between the two aspects of himself, what one might term his good and his bad selves, a battle in which victory against the outside forces is often purchased very dearly, by the defeat of his own real wish to grow, to achieve, to *be somebody,* beloved and respected.

Here, then, is the essence of the counselor's job, an individual relation to a child at a point of conflict, to help him find a way to use himself at school without fighting its controls and without destroying himself. We have to ask how the counselor can learn to become that rare "helper" who, while appreciating all the human anguish that often sits, or slouches, before him in the person of the refractory child, singled out as needing help beyond that of the teacher, can still unyieldingly hold him to what is required of him in the school setting by the necessity of his own growth and achievement. To everyone who undertakes this kind of job, it comes as a stunning revelation, and very soon, that understanding the child and appreciation of his problems are of themselves not enough. For a while one may try to evade the nub of the job, by doing things for the child, trying to shift scenes as it were, to ease the child's difficulty at home or at school; but eventually it must be faced, that the nub is really in the face-to-face encounter with the child in one's own office, in the give and take of discussion that goes on between two people. As counselors you surely know that it is in what you say and how you say it, that all your helping potential lies. You face a child who says, "I hate this school. I don't care. I don't want to learn. I won't. All the teachers pick on me, and let everybody else get away with murder." And if he has the courage, he may say, as he may feel, "I hate you, too." You cannot find the answer in books. It resides in yourself. Nor can you wait until you have had an opportunity to think it over and work out the right reply, for the child needs and asks an instantaneous response

to what he is sharing of himself with you in that very moment. This is the only way he can know what relationship means, an active give and take in the living here and now of the charged experience, which has been narrowed down by his very coming to you, to the area of his inner pain, his despair and his fight.

I know that you know that there is a special skill which operates here, which can be taught and learned—and further, which *must* be learned. The what to do, and the how to do it and say it, have been identified in general as a process of helping, which has a known form and direction. It is not all left to the happenstance of the simple human relationship of two people. The two people here have a defined relationship; the one needs help from the other, who is there to give it. Sometimes within the moment itself, it seems to the counselor like "blind flying", so that he gives his spontaneous feeling response to the child somewhat hesitantly, but with great hope that it was the right thing to say. A person who has learned to use himself in this way, to further a troubled child's capacity to use his strength positively in his own behalf, rather than destroyingly, on looking back at an experience with a child can often discern that there was a form to that experience which at the time seemed so chaotic, and that each response he made, shaped and limited it, and so held it to a valid purpose. That purpose stemmed from the very setting in which they met—a school which is set up to teach the fundamental knowledge and skills which are needed in order to live, "at home" in our society. Real skill in this kind of counseling has such deceptive simplicity! When one reads records of skillful counseling they seem *just* right, just the right thing to say, so that one can rightly wonder why anyone has to learn it at all, if it "comes so naturally." It recalls to mind the reluctance of the artist Matisse—now over 80—to exhibit his work here two years ago. He wrote to the Curator of Painting of the Philadelphia Museum of Art:

> I have always tried to hide my own efforts, and wished my works to have the lightness of a springtime which never lets anyone suspect the labors it has cost. So I am afraid that the young, seeing in my work only the apparent facility and negligence in the drawing, will use this as an excuse for dispensing with certain efforts which I believe necessary.[3]

All professions and arts have had a common problem, once their skill was established, of how to teach that skill to others. Law, medicine, nursing, teaching, the ministry and others, have all been preoccupied with

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[3] Henri Matisse, *Catalogue,* Museum of Art, Philadelphia, Pa., 1948, p. 15.

whether to train people on the job, through an apprentice method concentrated on the doing, or to educate them *for* the job, to provide them with all the basic knowledge, and then trust that "knowing all," they will find their own skill once they are catapulted into the going situation. The original physicians, of course, developed their knowledge and evolved their skill at the bedside of a patient; but later, for long centuries, the degree of M.D. meant merely that the learned doctor knew all about medical science. He had the hall-mark, but he still had to work out for himself the practices of his calling, either on his own patients, or by apprenticing himself to an older physician. Today in medical education one of the questions of deepest concern is how to integrate medical knowledge, and clinical work with living patients.

The nurse was for years taught to make beds, to prepare and serve meals, to bathe patients, and so on, and her services were so absolutely required by the hospital, that training did not go far beyond the vocational teaching of these practical services. Only recently are schools of nursing including in the training program the basic knowledge on which the healing arts rest. Without this knowledge nursing might just as well remain a practical aide to the physician, and not a profession in its own right.

Perhaps you know, too, how the early law students poured over the stupendous libraries of law books, with which they had to be familiar; for entrance to the profession (the Bar) was through an examination that tested only this knowledge. It was taken for granted that they would find their own way into the existing arena of law practices, once they were admitted to it. Law education is still trying to find ways of helping law students experience the present practice of law, even while they are absorbing the voluminous content of the law books.

In social work we are much more like the mediaeval guilds which would not admit anyone to practice as a journeyman until he had demonstrated his skill in whatever field, by producing a "masterpiece." The business of helping troubled people is so immediate, and the helper so inescapably personally involved, that we have never been tempted to leave him out of the learning. From the moment education for social work, for helping, was created, about fifty years ago, field work experience in a social agency was woven into the training program as an inseparable part of the learning. You will see here the source of my feeling that it is false for a teacher to hold a counseling certificate, before he has placed himself in the risky and so different setting of the counselor, even for a brief experience. Mere courses in methods of counseling, and

methods of interviewing, are in themselves useless unless they are put to the actual test of practicality, while the learning *about* it is taking place. Whitehead, in writing about the meaning of the university's responsibility in education, says that no one "should remain blankly content with mere knowledge apart from all suggestion of relevant activity." "What the faculty have to cultivate is activity in the presence of knowledge. What the students have to learn is activity in the presence of knowledge." "This discussion," he goes on to say, "rejects the doctrine that students should first learn passively, and then having learned, should apply knowledge. It is a psychological error. In the process of learning there should be present, in some sense or other an—activity of application. In fact, the applications are part of the knowledge. For the very meaning of the things known is wrapped up in their relationships beyond themselves. Thus unapplied knowledge is knowledge shorn of meaning."[4]

For most of us learning *about* things is essentially an easy business. We do it in the safety of the classroom and our own study. It involves only oneself and the printed page, and through our own will to learn, we take in and put together various pieces of knowledge. In the practice of counseling, however, learning *about* anything is a snare and a delusion. For the course that is required, whether you call it "the principles of interviewing," or "the art of interviewing," is always of necessity more theoretical and more logical than life itself; and just so, it promises far more surety than it can deliver. For who has ever held an interview that followed the logical course of the principles? Here is one of the aspects in which we differ greatly from the medical student, whose logical uniformities grow out of his work with a cadaver, while we work with concepts about a process of life, developed in experience with living, changing human beings whose very experience with us changes them further; so that what may have been true of our client yesterday, may by tomorrow have taken a wide shift, and our neat plan for proceeding with him is discarded by the client's own readiness to take "a new tack."

Courses in interviewing often try to overcome the problem of the tendency to too great orthodoxy, by introducing the case method. Especially when the case material discussed is live material—the recording of actual interviews of counselors with children, or of counselors with teachers, or with parents—the learning is enlivened with the opportunity that it affords the student to project himself into the action, to imagine himself in this predicament, trying to feel how he might have extricated

[4] Alfred North Whitehead, *Essays in Science and Philosophy,* Philosophical Library, New York, 1947, p. 218.

himself. Therefore case discussion in class does not always stay put in the form of any principles, but is enriched with the novelty and unexpectedness of the individual experience of many members of the class.

But even here there is a false safety, for in discussion one can much more neatly analyze a problem, and see it whole, from one's own limited vision, than when one is only one of two real protagonists out in the realm of action rather than thought. In action all illusion of safety in knowing has to be given up, while one risks oneself to the unpredictable movement of an interchange between two people. Thus we come to that necessity for knowledge and action to become, as Whitehead states it, "mated" in experience. In social work language this is the field work experience in some kind of helping setting. I believe this kind of experience to be indispensable in the counselor's learning, regardless of how many courses he has taken on the content of the counselor's job; and it is preferable that the field work accompany the course, so that the true "mating" of knowledge and action take place. Here, in action, the counselor can learn many things about himself as an acting person, many unsuspected things from his own reactions when he is placed in the role of the one who represents the kind of authority that the helping person is expected to carry.

In most of us who go into the helping professions, there is a true desire to help others—and this is especially true for teachers who move into counseling. But we have usually conceived of this help as springing from our own greater maturity, or greater strength or knowledge. Thus the discipline that all would-be helpers must learn—and what a hard, hard lesson this is—is that the real solution, the most appropriate, the one that finally "clicks" for the client and engages all his positive desire to get out of his trouble, cannot be our invention, given as a free gift to an unhappy child or a disturbed parent. It is something the other person works out for himself, out of his own truer knowledge of his inner resourcefulness than we can ever know, no matter what objective tests we administer. Only he knows what he is willing to do, what cost he is willing to pay to move beyond his embattlement with life. No matter how often the instructor of casework techniques has spoken of the meaning and the value of the human resistance to taking help, it is nevertheless a disappointment and something of a blow for the helping person to feel, in experience, the power of that refusal, when he is so well-intentioned toward his client, so truly interested, concerned and caring. If you are to become a helper, there is no way to learn the real meaning of this basic fact in the helping process, except as you experience the rebuff, and take hold of your reaction to it.

This brings us starkly face to face with another important factor in the field work experience—that the student cannot handle it alone, but needs his own helper, a supervisor of practice, to whom the student can bring the problems in this relationship with a troubled person, in all of its changing phases, discuss his doubts and his frustration, and yet find the encouragement to use himself ever more fully and freely, and trustingly, in the helping role, in whatever social agency he is placed. It is not expected that a student should muddle through by himself, for in working with a supervisor he himself learns the meaning of taking help in a relationship, a kind of real knowledge which helps him understand what is happening between his client and himself, that is often so baffling.

It must be clear by now, that when I speak of field work for a school counselor in training, I refer to a special kind of experience in practice in a social agency, carefully selected by an instructor and geared to the learning that is taking place in the classroom. Only yesterday I heard a student practice teacher deplore her practice teaching experience because it is not consistent in theory or practice with the philosophy of education she is being taught in her classes. Though her instructor, when she made her complaint, expressed regret, he disclaimed any responsibility for her practice experience, saying that he was teaching the ideal of practice. But one does not learn how to do anything from an ideal that is purely theoretical. One learns most fundamentally from the reality of the doing. The real and the ideal must have a basic similarity in purpose and method, no matter how specific and individual the actual experience is. No wonder the student is confused! The setting of the practice experience must be chosen so that the student can feel the basic harmony, and so create his own integration of theory and practice, which one has to have before one can comfortably act.

This field work experience can be had in many different kinds of social agencies, including schools—family care, child care, courts, hospitals and so on. It is important to recognize that an agency takes great responsibility in allowing a student to learn how to help through actually giving help to a real client. It would not be possible to provide this kind of experience unless the situation were carefully protected by a competent supervisor, competent not only in the skill of helping, but also in the skill of supervising. Otherwise the already troubled client would have to bear too much of the risk of being learning material.

I shall be quite realistic and admit that social agencies are most reluctant to subject their clients to this risk for a student who is not seriously in training, who is only taking a course because it is required

for certification. The social work student who devotes his full time to the task, obtains in other classes supplemental help, which otherwise the agency must make some effort to supply for the part time student who "only wants to carry a few cases." The social agency will surely insist upon—and should—a stipulated period of time, regularly planned, to extend in duration in some relation to the kind of service the agency gives. The client's circumstances cannot be asked to fit into the few hours the student may want to use for that purpose. Field work in the school counseling job itself would provide the most appropriate training, but it is by no means the only kind from which the student can learn to help. I do believe, however, that whenever possible, a student counselor ought to have experience in a setting where the helper must represent the authority under which the service operates, whether the direct authority of law, as in a court or training school, or public assistance agency—or the delegated authority of the child protective agency. It is no easy matter to help a child or adult find his range of freedom to make choices for his own conduct—choices upon which the course of his life will often turn—when that freedom operates within the real limits of an authoritative setting such as the school so rightly is. Field experience in a completely permissive setting is not adequate preparation for carrying the role of school counselor.

I want to make it clear that some kinds of field work which I have heard discussed for counselor training seem quite useless to me. For instance, I see no validity in a student's merely visiting the homes of clients of social agencies or social settlements on any pretext. If this visiting is planned, as has been explained, to help teachers and counselors see "how people live," it begins with a promise of difference of human stuff which makes the visitor an objective spectator, in a strange world, which role is inconsistent with the role he must carry as one who must engage feelingly with others. And further, it places the student in the intolerable position of being an intruder in another person's home, without any right to be there, without any purpose which can bring him and his "host" together in a mutually understood encounter. This kind of experience ignores one of the basic questions a helper must always ask of himself: for what purpose have we come together? The only purpose that ever brings a social worker into a client's home unasked, is to represent the authority of the law that expresses the community's concern, when delinquent parents have failed to give their children minimum basic care. No, the proper field work for a school counselor must in structure and purpose relate to the essential task which the counselor must perform day in and day out in the school setting.

A few years ago, among the distinguished foreign social workers who visited the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work was one of the foremost teachers of social work in one of the western European countries. We had an interesting discussion of the place of the field work experience in our respective schools, but it became clear to both of us that we were talking from very different premises. In her country every student was required as part of her training, to have a period of living-in with a poor family, to help them as housekeeper, nurse, or maid during illness and other trouble. In no other way could they believe that the student would come to know the problems of poor housing, of family instability, of poor health, etc., in low income homes, and so become truly related to a wider humanity than she had previously known. In a country where the professional social workers are separated from their clients by such wide distinctions of class levels and class consciousness, perhaps this kind of experience serves a purpose—but surely in our society it is false in tone, and quite without proper function.

We are traditionally very word-minded in education. In this brief paper, however, I have been trying to state my belief that words alone are a poor substitute for the living experience of relationship which is the school counselor's medium of activity. The Harvard Report on General Education in a Free Society says that "—language deputizes for what has to be absent. It tells us what we might see or hear. But too often it gets in the way of, or replaces, all that could give it meaning."[5] In the school counselor's training it is not necessary to use language to replace what gives real meaning to the counselor's job; the duties he must perform do not "have to be absent" from his training. If these acts are identified and clearly defined, and properly integrated with language, they can become the core of vital learning, the learning of how to use himself responsibly with and for another person. This is the whole meaning of the field work aspect of training.

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[5] Report of the Harvard Committee, *General Education in a Free Society*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1945, p. 263.

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